



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
GREEK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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**STATEMENT OF THE GREEK NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (GNCHR)
Urgent need for an immediate, thorough and effective investigation into
the deadly shipwreck near the island of Chios.**

4 February 2026

The GNCHR expresses its deep sorrow at the tragic shipwreck that occurred in the early morning hours near the island of Chios, resulting in the loss of at least fifteen human lives and the serious injury of dozens more, including children and women in pregnancy. **The GNCHR extends its sincere condolences to the families of the victims.**

The GNCHR pays tribute to all those who have lost their lives in Greek seas. At the same time, it acknowledges the immediate mobilisation of the personnel of the Hellenic Coast Guard, which is also tasked with the surveillance of maritime borders, as well as of the health services of Chios, and the contribution of civil society organisations in rescuing and providing assistance and care to survivors.

The GNCHR stresses that any incident resulting in loss of life at sea requires the **immediate, comprehensive and transparent establishment and documentation of all the relevant facts**, and that it must be investigated with **full transparency and objectivity and in accordance with internationally recognised standards**. In particular, this includes accurate recording of the circumstances of the collision, collection of reliable testimonies from survivors and rescue teams, assessment of all available material (including video files, radar data and communications), and immediate provision of information to the victims' families and the public on the findings of the investigation.

The GNCHR recalls that the experience of previous deadly shipwrecks, such as those in 2014 at Farmakonisi and in 2023 south-west of Pylos, has repeatedly highlighted the importance of a substantive investigation, both to ensure accountability, where responsibility lies, and to prevent similar tragedies in the future. A timely and credible investigation of such incidents is a necessary precondition for **safeguarding the rule of law and strengthening trust in institutions**.

With regard in particular to the Farmakonisi case, the GNCHR recalls that Greece was found by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), in *Safi and Others v. Greece* (Application no. 5418/15), to be in violation, *inter alia*, of the procedural limb of Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights (right to life), due to **serious shortcomings in the subsequent investigation, which was found not capable of sufficiently elucidating the circumstances in which the shipwreck occurred**. This case-law makes clear that an effective, immediate and transparent investigation into the facts that led to such a tragedy constitutes a distinct and fundamental obligation in a State governed by the rule of law.

The GNCHR will closely monitor developments on this issue and further reiterates that the protection of human life and human dignity constitutes a fundamental obligation of the State, including in the context of the management of migration and refugee flows.